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STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF
HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF
ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS,
INCLUDING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE
REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES,
QUESTIONS RELATING TO REFUGEES,
RETURNEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS
AND HUMANITARIAN QUESTIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Identical letters dated 28 August 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you a statement issued on 28 August 1998 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea concerning the release of Ethiopian soldiers who have been made captive as a result of the border conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would kindly circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly under agenda items 20, 107 and 112.

(Signed) Tesfa Alem SEYOUM
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

98-25434 (E) 010998

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ANNEX

Statement on the release of Ethiopian soldiers, issued on 28 August 1998 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Eritrea

The Government of Eritrea has today, 28 August 1998 released 71 Ethiopian soldiers made captive in the border conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia. This constitutes the first batch. The International Committee of the Red Cross has been duly informed of this decision. Details about their repatriation are being discussed.

This unilateral humanitarian decision emanates from the stated policy of the Government of Eritrea to release unconditionally Ethiopian soldiers captured in the unfortunate conflict. It also reflects the sincere desire of the Government of Eritrea to see an early resolution to the border problem between Eritrea and Ethiopia through legal and peaceful means.

The Government of Eritrea further reaffirms that it does not see any rationale to this conflict. The border problem can only be resolved through technical demarcation and, if need be, by arbitration on the basis of established colonial treaties.

The Government of Eritrea avails itself of this occasion to renew its call to the international community to exert all necessary efforts to promote a rapid and peaceful resolution to the problem.